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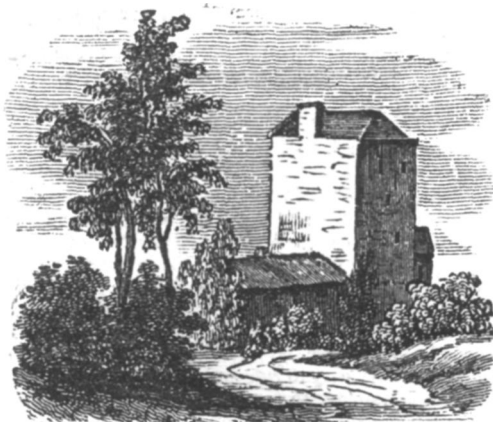
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it hard, but hollow to near the roots. It was now about four o'clock afternoon, in the month of July. Swallows were flying over Jeffersonville, Louisville, and the woods around, but there were none near the tree. I proceeded home, and shortly after returned on foot. The sun was going down behind the Silver Hills; the evening was beautiful: thousands of swallows were flying closely above me; and three or four at a time were pitching into the hole, like bees hurrying into their hive. I remained, my head leaning on the tree, listening to the roaring noise made within by the birds as they settled and arranged themselves, until it was quite dark, when I left the place, although I was convinced that many more had to enter. I did not pretend to count them, for the number was too great, and the birds rushed to the entrance so thick as to baffle the attempt. I had scarcely returned to Louisville, when a violent thunder storm passed suddenly over the town, and its appearance made me think that the hurry of the swallows to enter the tree was caused by this anxiety to avoid it. I thought of the swallows almost the whole night, so anxious had I become to ascertain their number, before the time of their departure should arrive.

"Next morning I rose early enough to reach the place long before the least appearance of day-light, and placed my head against the tree. All was silent within. I remained in that posture probably twenty minutes, when suddenly I thought the great tree was giving way, and coming down upon me. Instinctively I sprang from it, but when I looked up to it again, what was my astonishment to see it standing as firm as ever. The swallows were now pouring out in a black continued stream. I ran back to my post, and listened in amazement to the noise within, which I could compare to nothing else than the sound of a large wheel revolving under a powerful stream. It was yet dusky, so that I could hardly see the hour on my watch, but I estimated the time which they took in getting out at more than thirty minutes. After their departure, no noise was heard within, and they dispersed in every direction with the quickness of thought.

"I immediately formed the project of examining the interior of the tree, which, as my kind friend, Major Croghan, had told me, proved the most remarkable I had ever met with. This I did, in company with a hunting associate. We went provided with a strong line and a rope, the first of which we, after several trials, succeeded in throwing across the broken branch. Fastening the rope to the line we drew it up, and pulled it over until it reached the ground again. Provided with the longest cane we could find, I mounted the tree by the rope, without accident, and at length seated myself at ease on the broken branch; but my labour was fruitless, for I could see nothing through the hole, and the cane, which was about fifteen feet long, touched nothing on the sides of the tree within that could give any information. I came down fatigued and disappointed.

"The next day I hired a man, who cut a hole at the base of the tree. The shell was only eight or nine inches thick, and the axe soon brought the inside to view, disclosing a matted mass of exuviae, with rotten feathers reduced to a kind of mould, in which, however, I could perceive fragments of insects and quills. I had a passage cleared, or rather bored through this mass, for nearly six feet. This operation took up a good deal of time, and knowing by experience that if the birds should notice the hole below, they would abandon the tree, I had it carefully closed. The swallows came as usual that night, and I did not disturb them for several days. At last, provided with a dark lantern, I went with my companion about nine in the evening, determined to have a full view of the interior of the tree. The whole was opened with caution. I scrambled up the sides of the mass of exuviae, and my friend followed. All was perfectly silent. Slowly and gradually I brought the light of the lantern to bear on the sides of the hole above us, when we saw the swallows clinging side by side, covering the whole surface of the excavation. In no instance did I see one above another. Satisfied with the sight, I closed the lantern. We then caught and killed with as much care as possible more than a hundred, stowing them away in our pockets and bosoms, and slid down into the open air."



INCH CASTLE, CO. KILDARE.

The castle which our woodcut represents, is situated about three miles north-east of Athy, in the parish of Moone, and union of Timolin, and barony of East Narragh and Rheban. It was built by De Vesey, in the reign of King John, and afterwards enlarged by the sixth earl of Kildare, about 1420. There is but one of the towers now remaining, yet, from the extensive foundations, it must have been a place of considerable importance. The land in the neighbourhood lies remarkably flat, with the exception of two ridges that run nearly parallel northward from the castle, with a marsh lying between them.

It was on those heights the armies of Ormond and Mountgarrett, in 1642, marched in sight of each other the evening previous to the battle of Kilrush; that of Ormond on the high grounds of Ardsclull, Fontstown, and Kilrush; whilst the rebel army, under Mountgarrett, and attended by the Lords Dunboyne and Ikerrin, Roger Moore, Hugh Byrne, and other leaders of Leinster, proceeded in the same direction, along the height of Birtown, Ballyndrum, Glassealy, and Narraghmore. Mountgarrett having the advantage in numbers, and anxious for battle, out-marched Ormond's forces, and posted himself on Bull-hill and Kilrush, completely intercepting Ormond's further progress to Dublin: a general engagement became unavoidable. The left wing of the Irish was broken by the first charge; the right, animated by their leaders, maintained the contest for some time, but eventually fell back on a neighbouring eminence, since called Battlemount; here they broke, fled, and were pursued with great slaughter across the grounds they had marched over the day before. This victory was considered of so much consequence, that Ormond was presented by the English Government with a jewel, value £500.

Indeed the country for miles around Inch Castle has many historical connexions; to the east can be seen the much spoken of Rath of Mullimast, the ancient Carmen, or the enclosed place, which was the *Naasteighan*, where the states of the southern parts of Leinster met. It is situated on a high and gently sloping hill, and near it are sixteen little conical mounts, on which, it is supposed, the chiefs sat in council. Carmen was anathematized in the sixth century, and the place of assemblage of the chiefs, was then removed to the present Naas, one of the shire towns of the county. It takes its present name, Mullimast or *Mullach Mastean*, (the moat of decapitation) from the base conduct of some adventurers in the sixteenth century, who having overrun part of the neighbouring country, were resisted by the Irish chieftains that had properties on the Leix (Queen's county) side of the river Barrow. However, in order to have a final settlement of their differences, it was proposed by the adventurers, that a conference should be held at Carmen, which was agreed to; and on New Year's day, 1577, the chiefs of the Barrow side repaired to the place, where they were treacherously made prisoners and beheaded. Sixty years since a hole was shewed, where it was said the heads of the betrayed were buried; at that period it was twenty feet deep; it is now nearly closed. The successful assassins took possession of their victims' properties, and the barony bears

the name of Slieve-Maugue, or the Hills of Mourning to this day.

A little to the north of the castle is also to be seen the Moat of Ardscurr, Ascurr, or Arstoll, anciently *Rath ais-Cael*,* corruptly Rath-ascull. In 1315, the Scots, under Robert Bruce, gained a battle here, and plundered the neighbourhood. The rath stands where the battle was fought, and commands a great extent of country. Hammond le Crose, Sir William Prendergast, and John Lord de Bonneville, on the part of the Irish; and Fergus Andressan and Sir Walter Murray, of the Scottish party, were slain in this battle and buried in Athy.

About a furlong to the south of Inch Castle, is a small mound or tumulus, rendered interesting by the following tradition:

During the memorable year, 1439, when the plague was silently and awfully depopulating the country, a member of the family of Mac Kelly was in possession of the castle and the surrounding lands. His son, Ulick, was taken ill, and, as was customary, removed to the fields, where a shed was prepared for the occasion. Within a quarter of a mile was the little village of Bally-kil-bawn, (now Ballycolane) where Onny Moore lived with her brothers, and she, also, had been one of the many victims to Ulick Mac Kelly's deceit and treachery; but latterly she became the constant visitor of the *White Church*, whose inmates' lessons of peace and good will had not fallen uselessly on Onny's ears. She could look with calmness on the solitary she had made, with less of a vengeful, and more of a pardoning spirit; and to her, the mortality that raged was divested of half its terrors. It was early on the morning after Ulick was placed in the sick shed, that she was observed to cross the small river, and make her way through the marsh that almost surrounds the castle—and her purpose could be only known to one—she had not revealed it to any. For a few days after, if the inhabitants on the other side of the moor chanced to look to the sick corner, Onny could be seen in a sitting posture, a few feet from the opening of the tent, with her face turned towards it; and, after many days, when the raven and magpie were found to be the only visitants of the place, the token in those times that the work of death was done, some neighbours ventured near, and found the one putrified in the tent, and the other in her wonted position, but lifeless. The bodies with the shed were reduced to ashes, and a mound raised upon the spot, on which there yet remains seven very old white-thorn trees. Report points it out as a place of no small superstitious dread, and even at this time a female form is said to be often seen sitting near the hill, having a gentle motion from side to side, something in the manner of a woman when oppressed with sorrow.

Connected with the above story, are the following fragments of a ballad, communicated to the writer by a very old person, who remembers it to have been a favourite wake-house song in the neighbourhood:

"Oh! hear me sogarth's† of Kilbawn,†
Oh! listen to my sorrows;
The clouds hang heavy o'er the home,
Of Onny's harden'd brothers.

* There appears to have been much mistake in attributing the erection of raths to the Danes; the word signifies a pledge. Long before the invasions of the Danes they were constructed by the Irish chieftains and their dependants, and called raths or pledges, for the fealty and due subordination of the adjacent country. Had raths been erected by the Danes, they would have been prostrated on their expulsion; but, instead of being objects of aversion, they are held in the greatest reverence by the country people. Baron Finglass, who wrote in the year 1510, says, (Brev. of Ireland). "That the English statutes, passed in Ireland, are not observed eight days after passing, whereas those laws made by the Irish on their hills, are kept firm and stable, without breaking through them for any favor or reward." This may show, even at that time, the uses to which they were applied.

† Priests.

‡ Whitechurch: it was once called Cean-pul-a-snauta; the remains still exist near the road side, opposite Ballycolane; from its stile of architecture it appears to be of great antiquity.

And heavier still, the clouds that lower,
On Ulick's father's land;
For there, in sadness, lies a flower,
Strew'd by Ulick's hand.

* * * * *
On moon-light nights the shadow flits
Across the glaise and moor;
And at the cairn in silence sits,
Until the midnight hour.

* * * * *
The bittern's* only moan is heard,
Along the waving reeds;
But the shadow still is feared,
As Onny's restless shade."

The town of Inch, including Ballycolane, Turnerstown, Foxhill and Glanbane, in all about 1060 acres, was set by the Earl of Kildare to Sir W. Burrows, for twenty-one years, from the 1st May, 1662, for one hundred pounds per annum, a fat ox, or four pounds.

The chiefs of this country were Hy Caelen or Mac Kelly; and it is said that the last master of the castle, Girode-crone Mac Kelly, defended it during his life time with reckless determination.

Several of the foregoing particulars, amongst other sources, are taken from a valuable and interesting work, by the late Captain Thomas J. Rawson, of Cardenton, entitled "A Statistical Survey of the County of Kildare," with an introduction to its ancient history.

ENNA.



METAL IMAGE, FOUND NEAR CLONMEL.

IRISH ANTIQUITIES.

The above engraving is taken from a correct drawing of a curious metal figure which has been lately found in

* The moor that almost surrounds Inch Castle was remarkable, within the memory of persons yet living, for the number of bitterns found in it; at present the snipe or heather-bleat is the principle occupant.